



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BORDER PATROL AGENT INDICTED ON
BRIBERY, DRUG TRAFFICKING AND OTHER CHARGES**

TUCSON, Ariz. -- United States Border Patrol Agent Juan L. Sanchez, 28, of the Nogales, Ariz. Station, has been charged with 17 counts of bribery and drug trafficking offenses according to a federal grand jury indictment returned on May 18, 2005. Late this afternoon, Sanchez appeared in Tucson federal court for his initial appearance. He was released on a property bond; a trial date has been set for July 26, 2005 in front of Judge Roll.

The indictment alleges one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 3,500 pounds of marijuana, six counts of possession with intent to distribute 100-1000 kilograms of marijuana, six counts of possession of a firearm during a drug trafficking offense and four counts of accepting bribes. The violations are alleged to have occurred during the summer of 2002 through January 28, 2004.

Paul K. Charlton, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, stated that "this is one of a continuing series of cases that is the result of our focus on public corruption. It's also important to recognize that the vast majority of Border Patrol agents are hard working men and women whose integrity is unquestionable."

The maximum punishment for the conspiracy charge is life in prison, a \$4,000,000 fine or both. The other drug charges carry maximum sentences of 40 years in prison, a \$2,000,000 fine or both. The bribery charges carry maximum sentences of 15 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. The firearms charges carry maximum sentences of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Southern Arizona Corruption Task Force, which includes agents from the FBI, DEA, Immigration and Customs Enforcement Office of Public Responsibility (ICE/OPR) and the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division (IRS/CID). The task force also received assistance in this investigation from the Santa Cruz County Metro Task Force and U.S. Border Patrol.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The prosecution is being handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR 05-1005-TUC-JMR (HCE)
RELEASE NUMBER: 2005-108

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